

The Influence of Age in Indirectness of Women Speech

By

**Syed Sikander Ali Shah
ID 080484018 (M. Phil)
Applied Linguistics**

**UNIVERSITY
OF
MANAGEMENT & TECHNOLOGY
C-II Johar Town Lahore**



Acknowledgements

This is an effort done by the grace of Almighty Allah and prophet Muhammad (SAWW). Countless thanks to Almighty Allah Who guided the researcher in the valley of darkness, without which we can be lost in gigantic forest of murkiness. He gave us courage to do this work with enthusiasm. Researcher feels great pleasure to express his heartiest and sincere gratitude to respected and honorable Prof. Nazir Malik for his consistent supervision, inspiration, guidance and compassionate suggestions without which this study would not have taken this shape.

Especially the prayers of my parents which are the source of my success in my literary career cannot be unnoticed. May God give my parents and teachers happy, healthy and blissful life. I dedicate my thesis to my parents who encouraged and prayed for me to proceed with my studies. Not only my teachers and parents but the support and help given to me by my colleagues i.e. Ahsan Mukhtar, Dy. Director, Director Colleges Lahore, Fahad Aftab, Assistant Professor FC College Lahore, Dr. Zarish, Ganga Ram Hospital, Major Naveed Akber, Khalid Gift University Gujranwala, and Malik Imtiaz, Lecturer Govt. College Jarranwala and the last but not least Ehsan, is unparalleled to any thing. May God lead us and my all other University fellows a prosperous life. (Ameen)

Abstract

Indirectness is indispensable in human language because speakers not always to say exactly what they mean. It is the vital part of human language irrespective of gender either they are males or females they use indirectness in their conversation. It is now widely accepted mostly women prefer to hint at their meanings rather than stating them directly. Deborah Tannen has suggested American women use more indirectness, and are therefore sensitive to its use by others. It may be further said that whether women living in west or east more or less their nature is same. Indirectness plays a vital role in indirectness of speech of Pakistani women as well. In their indirectness different factors are involved e.g. age, qualification profession and social status as well. This focus of this research is the indirectness of women speech and how much role is played by age in indirectness of their speech. Further to discover the relationship between age and power with reference to indirectness in women's speech. The results of the data collection show that indirectness plays definitely a vital role in indirectness of women and when they get social power their indirectness decreases.

Table of Contents
Contents

Page No

Acknowledgement
Abstract

Chapter 1 Introduction

1	Purposes of the Research	1
1.2	Background to the Research	2
1.3	Aims & Objectives	3
1.4	Research Questions	4
1.5	Significance of the Study	4
1.6	Limitation of the Study	4

Chapter 2 Review of the Related Literature

2.	Overview of the Chapter	6
2.1	What is indirectness	6
2.1.1	Indirectness vs. Directness	9
2.1.2	Indirectness & Politeness	9
2.1.3	Indirectness in Women Speech	15
2.2	Motives of Indirectness	20
2.3	Role of Face in Indirectness	26
2.4	Power, Solidarity & Indirectness	27
2.5	Social invaluableeness of female Speakers	29
2.6	Gender and Indirectness	30
2.7	Women's language	33
2.8	Jennifer Coates and Deborah Jones	35

Chapter 3 Methodology & Procedure

3.	Overview of the Chapter	38
3.1	Research Methodology	38
3.2	Population	38
3.3	Sampling	39
3.4	Tools for Data Collection	39
3.4.1	Questionnaire	39
3.4.2	Discourse Completion Test	39
3.5	Data Collection	40
3.6	Data analysis Procedure	40
3.6.1	Quantitative analysis of Data	40
3.6.2	Qualitative analysis of Data	40
3.7	Pilot testing of Questionnaire and its Reliability	41
3.8	Pilot testing of DCT and its Reliability	42

Chapter 4 Analysis and Interpretation of Data

4.	Overview of the Chapter	44
4.1	Reliability of Questionnaire	45
4.2	Case Processing Summary of Questionnaire	46
4.3	Overall analysis of Questionnaire	67
4.4	Data analysis of Discourse Completion Test	70
4.5	Reliability of Discourse Completion Test	70
4.6	Case Processing Summary of Discourse Completion Test	71
4.7	Overall analysis of DCT	93

Chapter 5 Results & Findings

5.	Overview of the Chapter	96
5.1	Results & Findings	96
5.2	Recommendations	102
i	References	103
ii	Appendix I	107
iii	Appendix II	109

DEDICATION

To

My parents

who encouraged

and prayed for me

Chapter 1

Introduction

1. Purposes of the Research.

The purpose of this research is to explore indirectness in women speech and the influence of age in indirectness of their speech as well. It is normal in all human societies for speakers not always to say exactly what they mean. In indirect speech acts the speaker communicates to the hearer more than he actually says. In conversation, we usually understand what others are saying even when people do not express their intentions straightforwardly. The increase in age of women leads them towards their social power due to which their indirectness decreases. "Men are Direct and Women are Indirect, Men are more Boasting and Women are more Retiring, Men apologize less than Woman" (Laura, 2007). One obvious feature of how language operates in social interactions is its relationship with power. Power is a measure of an entity's ability to control the environment around itself, including the behavior of other entities. It inclines us or makes us want to behave in certain ways or adopt opinions or attitudes without obvious force. Our words are never neutral, they carry the power that reflects the interests of those who speak or write (Fiske, 1994; Fowler, et. al.. 1979). So, having all this in mind the concern is to find out indirectness in women speech and the influence of age involved in indirectness of their speech.

1.2. Background to the Research

Indirectness is always present and indispensable in conversational interaction but people differ in terms of whether they express their meanings directly or indirectly and whether they look for indirect meanings in remarks of others. All of us have different styles of communication with other people. Our indirectness depends on a lot of factors i.e. what is our gender, where we are, where we come from, where we were brought up, our educational background, our age etc. According to Searle, in indirect speech acts “the speakers communicate to the hearer more than they actually say by way of relying on their mutually shared background information, both linguistic and non-linguistic, together with the rational powers of rationality and inference on the part of the hearer” (1975: 60-61).

According to Tannen, at work place women use rapport talk, make requests, ask more questions, and talk about relationships, feelings and people. They are commonly fond of expressive style; focus on the ability to express emotions, more likely to be sensitive to other’s feelings, during conflicts more likely to engage in negative behaviors such as strong negative feelings, guilt manipulation and verbal attacks. (Tannen, 2007)

Coates (1986) found women when talking to each other reveal a lot about their private lives. They also stick to one topic for long times. They are taught that they must relate to others in order to survive. They talk about people and feelings to enhance

personal interaction. To women, revealing information about themselves is a way of establishing a connection with their colleagues. (Regan, 1993)

Lakoff is of the view that women have a different way of speaking from men—a way of speaking that both reflects and produces a subordinate position in a society. According to her, women's life is a rife with such devices such as mitigators (sort of, I think) and inessential qualifiers (really happy, so beautiful). This language, she went on to argue, renders women's speech tentative, powerless and trivial; and as such, it disqualifies them from position of power and authority. In this sense, language itself is a tool of oppression—it is learned as a part of learning to be a woman, imposed on women by societal norms, and in turn it keeps women in their place.

Women are indirect and more retiring, apologizing. They employ Sincere Praise, ask Questions, more "Thanking" in their communication styles and explore in Conversation. (Laura, 2007)

1.3. Aims & Objectives.

The research aims to:

1. Explore indirectness in women speech.
2. Investigate the role of age in indirectness of women speech.